Kenneth Toner and Lewis Smith – Out Riding a Horse

Reflections

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This photograph shows young Kenneth Toner on horseback, with his uncle Louis Smith standing nearby. Kenneth looks to be about four to six years old—he was born in 1904, so that places the photo right around 1910, give or take a year.

The card itself is on AZO postcard stock with the triangular stamp box, which comes close to matching that 1915–1919 production period. The back carries some scrawled graphite handwriting—hard to make out, and printed upside down like so many of these cards. Louis's name is spelled incorrectly, and my grandmother Blanche's name also appears, perhaps because the card was directed to her. Kenneth, of course, was her older brother.

The photo has been through a lot. The surface is dirty and worn, as though it may have passed through children's hands before being tucked away. I like to imagine it was first given to Kenneth himself. Despite the wear, it's a charming scene: a boy perched proudly on a horse, with his uncle close at hand in his suit and hat—likely his everyday attire.

As for the location, I haven't been able to pin it down. It could be Yoncalla, or perhaps one of the ranch properties. The background mix of wooden buildings and small homes hints at a rural town setting. One of a dozen or so family photos from this era—most on similar postcard stock—this card captures a brief but vivid glimpse of Kenneth's early years.

POST CARD

A A Z O A
A PLACE A
Z STAMP Z
O HERE O
A A Z O A

CORRESPONDENCE HERE

NAME AND ADDRESS HERE

Blanche
Kennette
Uncle Isaac
5th